

Puget Sound Action Team

Request for Proposals

**For Innovative and Effective Approaches to
Corrective Actions for
Low Dissolved Oxygen Problems in Hood Canal**

June 1, 2004

Quick Facts

- Proposals (printed or electronic) are due at the Puget Sound Action Team (Action Team) office by 5 p.m., Monday, June 28, 2004.
- There are 2 funding windows under this RFP:
 - 1) Innovative demonstration projects, up to \$400,000 dollars of total funding with per project funding between \$25,000 and \$100,000 dollars. For this funding stream, no matching funds are required but they are encouraged.
 - 2) Urgent and obvious corrective actions and education efforts, up to \$200,000 dollars of total funding with per project funding between \$10,000 and \$50,000. For this funding stream, a minimum 10% match is required. Match can be in-kind.
- Any Washington State business, organization, agency, school, tribal government, local government or federal agency may apply.
- Services provided under a contract are compensated on a reimbursement basis.

INTRODUCTION

During the past several years data have indicated that hypoxia (low oxygen concentrations) in Hood Canal has become more severe. In the past two years, fish kills during low oxygen conditions resulted in unprecedented fishing closures by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Evidence shows that inputs of human-related nutrient and biochemical oxygen demand (BOD¹) are contributing to this worsening dissolved oxygen (DO) problem in the main body of Hood Canal. While further study and modeling are needed and expected to be carried out, we also must undertake new actions to reduce nutrient sources into Hood Canal.

In 2004, Congress appropriated \$500,000 and the Washington State Legislature provided \$100,000 to the Puget Sound Action Team, to begin to implement corrective actions in Hood Canal to deal with human sources of nutrient pollution that contribute to the low DO problem.

This funding has been allocated to help implement recommendations from the Preliminary Assessment and Corrective Actions (PACA) plan recently completed by the Puget Sound Action Team and the Hood Canal Coordinating Council. The plan identified and quantified major human-related nitrogen sources that contribute to the low DO levels in Hood Canal. This plan is available on the Action Team's Web site, http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/hood_canal.htm and by calling (800) 54-SOUND. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the plan prior to submitting a proposal.

Topics for Funding

The Action Team will use up to \$400,000 of the federal appropriation to fund special studies and demonstration projects that test and develop innovative approaches to the problems

¹ Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) refers to the amount of oxygen used by microorganisms in an aquatic environment to decompose organic material such as dead plants, leaves, grass clippings, manure, or sewage during a 5-day test. As the amount of organic material increases in a body of water, the number of microorganisms and their requirement for oxygen also increases.

identified and corrective actions recommended in the PACA plan². The Action Team will also use up to \$200,000 (\$100,000 federal and \$100,000 state) to fund urgent and obvious corrective actions and needed education efforts. Emphasis will be placed on projects that effectively show a reduction in nitrogen and BOD input to Hood Canal.

The Action Team will accept applications for projects that address the following broad problem areas. Examples of the types of corrective actions that are highlighted in the PACA plan are also listed below. Projects must either test and/or demonstrate innovative approaches to solving problems, implement urgent and obvious actions or provide education and public involvement that leads to reductions in non-point source contributions of nutrient pollution.

Human Sewage

- Assess needs and develop innovative collection and/or treatment facilities with effective nitrogen removal.
- Develop creative approaches to promote the use of and provide trainings about innovative technologies for onsite sewage systems that produce treated sewage effluent with low-nitrogen concentrations.
- Conduct education activities that convey the relationship between onsite sewage disposal and low DO. Activities should focus on actions that decrease nutrient input into Hood Canal. A necessary component of this is to first assess and address the target audience's understanding, motivation, and barriers to change behavior.

Stormwater Runoff

- Implement low impact development (LID) practices, particularly those that use innovative approaches to remove social and economic barriers that may be preventing these practices from being implemented.
- Create LID demonstration projects targeting residents, developers, resource managers, and community leaders.
- Provide trainings that instruct and motivate shoreline property owners to reduce nitrogen and BOD input from landscaping practices and pet waste.
- Help institutionalize the use of LID techniques.

² Demonstration Projects are projects which are designed to demonstrate, evaluate, and promote the broader application or implementation of innovative practices, methods, or approaches for protecting or restoring water quality. This could include the transfer or application or training in innovative approaches or practices from other areas into the stewardship and management practices used in the Hood Canal basin. Demonstration projects will require evaluation, monitoring and project documentation elements. These project elements will enable project proponents to more broadly share, with other groups or individuals, the methods, results, and recommendations for improving the project's approach to better meet local conditions and needs.

Agricultural Practices

Encourage farm owners to adopt practices that reduce nitrogen and BOD runoff and leaching into Hood Canal. Examples of these preferred practices include:

- Construct fences to exclude animals from waterways,
- Maintain streamside vegetation and buffers,
- Apply manure at times and rates that prevent excess from being carried into waterways,
- Store and cover manure so that it is not accessible to rain or flood waters, and
- Maintain pastures and animal-keeping areas to minimize run-off.

Chum Carcass Disposal

Implement alternatives to the current practice of disposing chum salmon carcasses in marine waters after the eggs have been removed. Examples of this include:

- Find buyers to purchase the early-returning brighter fish for human consumption, perhaps as canned or smoked product;
- Bulk compost the carcasses and mix with wood chips for plant fertilizer or selling the carcasses to a pet food manufacturer;
- Freeze carcasses for later land application in the upper watershed, where nitrogen is needed to support wild salmonid production in freshwater systems.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Use the guidelines listed below. If the following format is not used, or if any of these elements are missing, the proposal will be ineligible for funding. Your proposal must not exceed eight pages, excluding the appendix.

You may submit applications in hard copy format via US mail, FedEx, UPS, facsimile or by hand. We will also accept applications via e-mail.

Proposal Presentation

1. Paper: 8 ½-inch x 11-inch.
2. Font size: 10 point or larger.
3. Margins: 1-inch (top, bottom, left, right).
4. Page length: Eight (8) pages not including the appendix.
5. Number of copies: One

IMPORTANT: Assemble and number your proposal elements as described below. Use the headings listed below.

I. Cover Page

- Organization submitting proposal
- Address
- Name of contact person for the project, telephone, e-mail, fax
- Name of alternate contact person, telephone, e-mail
- Name of fiscal officer, telephone, e-mail
- Geographic area served by project (be specific)

This project reduces nitrogen and BOD input into Hood Canal from the following source(s):

- Human Sewage
- Stormwater Runoff
- Agricultural Practices
- Chum Carcasses

This project is a:

- Demonstration Project
- Urgent and Obvious Corrective Action
- Education and Public Involvement

Exact funding amount requested: \$ _____

Matching/in-kind funds? No Yes Amount \$ _____

II. Abstract (5 points)

Summarize in one paragraph the goals, purpose, and audience of the project. Include what you want to accomplish and how it will be accomplished. Describe how your project will reduce nitrogen and BOD input into Hood Canal.

III. Project Design (50 points)

Your project design must include sections A-E in the following order:

A. Issue and/or problem

Describe the issue and/or problem to be addressed. The issue or problem must be clearly tied to reducing the human related sources of nitrogen entering Hood Canal that are listed above.

B. Objectives

List the objectives of the project. They should be specific, realistic, and measurable. Objectives should include the results or outcomes of the project. Include immediate and long-term benefits. Indicate whether this project has the potential to serve as a model that could be applied elsewhere.

C. Target audience

Describe your target audience, the number and age of people the project will involve or reach. Describe why this is the most appropriate audience for your project.

D. Activities

Describe the project activities you will conduct to achieve the objectives listed above. Clearly state what your project will accomplish and the specific deliverables (products) of the project, such as, publications, events, or 'on-the-ground' actions.

E. Evaluation

This is a very important component of the project design. Describe how you will evaluate your project to determine its effectiveness in reducing nitrogen and BOD input into Hood Canal. For each project objective (listed above), describe how you will measure its success. Provide a method to quantify results where appropriate.

IV. Project Personnel (10 points)

Provide a brief description of the sponsoring organization and its mission. List the name and affiliation of the individual(s) proposed as project lead(s). In Appendix A, provide a one-paragraph description of each project personnel member noting his or her current position and relevant experience. Attach a job description if the position has not been filled yet.

Project personnel are individuals directly involved in the day-to-day activities of the proposed project. They are familiar with the project's work plan and budget, play a lead role in most or all elements of the project and are responsible for managing the contract. They may be paid staff or volunteers.

V. Project Partners (10 points)

List the project partners. Partners are people who commit resources or advice. Technical projects must have a qualified partner that can provide technical review.

VI. Budget and Cost Justification (25 points)

The Action Team will evaluate your budget and cost justification on how clearly you describe your funding needs and how realistic and appropriate the costs are for the project.

A. Budget

Present your budget using the categories below. See the information below for definitions of these categories and details about allowable costs. You may omit a category if you have no costs associated with it.

Budget Category	Request	In Kind/Matching	Total
Personnel			
x hours @ x dollars (include name or title of each person)			
Office			

Travel			
Materials			
Special			
Total			

B. Cost Justification/Explanation

Write a brief narrative summarizing the funding needs for your project, linking the five budget categories listed above. Give a cost analysis of each deliverable that is included in the Activities section. For example, if you propose conducting a series of workshops, indicate the projected cost for each workshop. Describe resource commitments of in-kind donations, funds, and/or volunteers from other groups.

Allowable and Non-allowable Costs

Allowable Costs

All costs must result solely from work performed under the project contract. The contractor must provide the durable equipment and property needed to complete the work of the contract. The following are contract performance costs that are allowable.

Personnel

- Salaries and wages, employee benefits.
- Professional services (per hour rate with estimated/budgeted time allowed).
- Legal expenses limited to legal needs of the contractor related to contract work (not for defense of claim against the contractor).

Office

- Postage, shipping, copying, printing, office supplies, telephone costs (solely related to contract work).
- Rental of office space and insurance (prorated for the life of the contract).

Travel

- Mileage rate at \$0.375 cents a mile.
- Lodging/meals reimbursement per diem according to state guidelines for volunteers and staff (see www.ofm.wa.gov/policy/10.htm).

Materials

- Materials necessary to carry out the work of the contract (give the actual price only).
- Equipment rental for the sole use of contract work (maintenance and repair only to keep this equipment in operating order for the life of the contract).
- Reference materials (if related to contract work but must be available to the public).

Special costs

Expenses unique to your project that do not fit into other budget categories.

- Computer software—only if it is unique to your project and specified in the contract.
- Hosting meetings and conferences—only if clearly defined in contract. (Agenda and attendee list required if refreshments are served)
- Attending meetings and conferences—only for presentations of information related to contract work.

Food

- As long as state guidelines are met. See www.ofm.wa.gov/policy/70.10.htm for more information.

Non-allowable Costs

The Action Team will not reimburse costs that have benefits outside the contract's scope of work, for example:

- Computer hardware and supplies
- Contingency funds
- Contributions and donations
- Depreciation
- Entertainment
- Fines and penalties
- Bad debts
- Interest rates and cost of borrowing
- Prepayments
- Legislative expenses
- Unexpended funds

VII. Appendix A

Project Personnel Description/Qualifications

For each individual identified in Section IV as project personnel, provide a one-paragraph description noting their current position and relevant experience.

Proposal Deadline

Your proposal application (printed or electronic) **is due** at the Puget Sound Action Team office by 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 28, 2004. The Action Team reserves the right to disregard responses delivered after that date and time.

All questions and correspondence regarding this RFP should be directed to:

RFP Coordinator:

Stephanie Lidren, RFP Coordinator
Director Administrative Services
Puget Sound Action Team
Phone: (360) 725-5441
Fax: (360) 725-5456
E-mail: slidren@psat.wa.gov

U.S. Mail

PO Box 40900
Olympia, WA 98504-0900

Other Deliveries

Puget Sound Action Team
General Administration Building

210 11th Avenue SW, 4th Floor
Olympia, WA 98501

Postmarks on or before the deadline do not qualify the proposal. The Action Team will NOT accept late proposals.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

Evaluation Procedure

Responsive proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this solicitation and any addenda issued. An evaluation team (Action Team staff and Action Team partnership agency staff), which will determine the ranking of the proposals, shall accomplish the evaluation of proposals.

The Action Team, at its sole discretion, may elect to select the top-scoring firms as finalists for an oral presentation.

Evaluation Weighting and Scoring

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

Abstract	5 points
Project Design	50 points
Project Personnel	10 points
Project Partners	10 points
Budget and Cost Justification	25 points
GRAND TOTAL FOR WRITTEN PROPOSAL	100 POINTS

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the project's ability to demonstrate reduced nitrogen and BOD input into Hood Canal and, in the case of demonstration projects, the use of innovative approaches to achieve this goal. Projects must adhere to the requirements outlined in this RFP and provide services at competitive costs. The selection will be based on the following:

1. The proposal accurately and convincingly describes the issue and/or problem to be addressed.
2. Objectives are realistic and measurable.
3. The proposal clearly identifies the target audience. The target audience is appropriate for the intended project.
4. The proposed activities are effective approaches for reaching the target audience and achieving the desired objectives.
5. The evaluation provides a methodology to measure the effectiveness of the proposed activities.
6. Project personnel are qualified to carry out the project successfully.

7. Project partners are appropriate to the project's goals and will be able to commit necessary resources and assistance.
8. Funding needs are clearly described and costs are realistic and appropriate for the proposed work.

Finalist Selection

Based on evaluation of responses against the selection criteria listed above it is the intent of the Action Team to offer awards, negotiate contracts, and brief selected contractors on contracting requirements in August 2004.

Contractors must have a Washington State Tax Registration Number and/or an IRS Employer Identification Number. Successful applicants who are individuals or non-incorporated organizations may need to select a responsible fiscal agent prior to execution of their contract.

When contractors sign the contract and begin work, they must prepare an evaluation plan as their first deliverable, prior to reimbursement of other project expenses.

The Action Team compensates services provided under contract on a reimbursement basis. You may request reimbursements to be scheduled monthly or quarterly. All contractors must submit quarterly updates as well as a final report including a project evaluation at the conclusion of the contract period.

Contractors retain all rights to any materials and all other information delivered under the terms of their contract. The Action Team retains the right to use, publish or reproduce these materials or information without notification or additional reimbursement to the contractor. The materials produced with these public funds are public materials and the Action Team has the right to reproduce and provide these materials to the public. Contractors will be required to provide final products in an electronic format in addition to printed copies.

Oral Presentations May Be Required

Written submittals and oral presentations, if considered necessary, will be utilized in selecting the winning proposal. The Action Team, at its sole discretion, may elect to select the top-scoring finalists from the written evaluation for an oral presentation and final determination of contract award. Should the Action Team elect to hold oral presentations, it will contact the top-scoring firm(s) to schedule a date, time and location. Commitments made by the Consultant at the oral interview, if any, will be considered binding. The score from the oral presentation will be considered independently and will determine the apparently successful proposers.

Notification to Proposers

Firms whose proposals have not been selected for further negotiation or award will be notified via FAX, e-mail or US mail.

Debriefing of Unsuccessful Proposers

Upon request, a debriefing conference will be scheduled with an unsuccessful Proposer. The RFP Coordinator must receive the request for a debriefing conference within three (3) business days after the Notification of Unsuccessful Proposer letter is faxed/e-mailed/mailed to the Proposer. The debriefing must be held within three (3) business days of the request.

Discussion will be limited to a critique of the requesting Proposer's proposal. Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of the other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted in person or on the telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of one hour.

Protest Procedure

This procedure is available to Proposers who submitted a response to this solicitation document and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the Proposer is allowed three (3) business days to file a protest of the acquisition with the RFP Coordinator. Protests may be submitted by facsimile, but should be followed by the original document.

Proposers protesting this procurement shall follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures shall not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Proposers under this procurement.

All protests must be in writing and signed by the protesting party or an authorized Agent. The protest must state the grounds for the protest with specific facts and complete statements of the action(s) being protested. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included. All protests shall be addressed to the RFP Coordinator.

Only protests stipulating an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

- **A matter of bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of the evaluator.**
- **Errors in computing the score.**
- **Non-compliance with procedures described in the procurement document or Action Team policy.**

Protests not based on procedural matters will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit if they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a proposal, or 2) Action Team's assessment of its own and/or other agencies needs or requirements.

Upon receipt of a protest, the Action Team will hold a protest review. The Action Team director or an employee delegated by the Director who was not involved in the procurement will consider the record and all available facts and issue a decision within five business days of receipt of the protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a protest may affect the interest of another Proposer, such Proposer will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest to the RFP Coordinator.

The final determination of the protest shall:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold the Action Team's action; or
- Find only technical or harmless errors in the Action Team's acquisition process and determine the Action Team to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or

- Find merit in the protest and provide the Action Team options which may include:
 - Correct the errors and re-evaluate all proposals, and/or
 - Reissue the solicitation document and begin a new process, or
 - Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.

If the Action Team determines that the protest is without merit, the Action Team will enter into a contract with the apparent successful contractor. If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the alternatives noted in the preceding paragraph will be taken.